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SIMON WIESENTHAL CENTER FOR HOLOCAUST STUDIES
on the campus of yeshiva university of los angeles

June 26, 1980

Mayor Erastus Corning, II
City Hall
Albany, N. Y. 12207

Dear Mayor Corning:

The Holocaust has long been referred to as a watershed in the history of mankind; a time during which the darkest side of human behavior emerged. It will ever serve as a reminder and warning of this potential of man's inhumanity to man.

There were those, however, who in the midst of the madness stood up and fought tyranny and whose capacity of humanity and heroism shone brilliantly against the darkness of Genocide. And one man, Raoul Wallenberg, stands above the rest. For here was a man whose country (Sweden) was not at war, whose financial security was guaranteed (his family was known as the Rockefellers of Sweden) but who nonetheless carelessly risked his life time and again to save tens of thousands of Hungarian Jews from the clutches of the Nazi Genocide during the closing months of the Second World War. Raoul Wallenberg is credited with saving thirty thousand Jews directly and perhaps as many as 70 thousand indirectly from the same fate which befell six million of their brethren. Unfortunately, and inexplicably, the Russians kidnapped and incarcerated Wallenberg at the end of the Second World War and only twelve years later claimed that he had died in prison in 1947. However, on the basis of testimony recently reaching the West from the Gulag, members of the Wallenberg family, Simon Wiesenthal, the famed Nazi hunter, and other interested parties, are not convinced that Wallenberg is dead. All efforts to date to verify his fate with the Soviet authorities have gone unheeded.

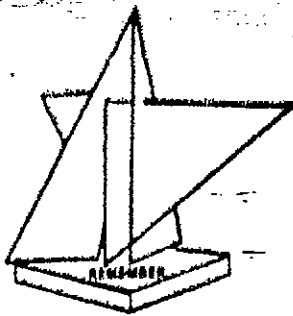
The Wiesenthal Center is asking our public officials and institutions to recognize the acts and legacy of this great man on what will be his 68th birthday - August 4, 1980 - be it through proclamation or executive order. We also strongly urge you to incorporate into your statement or resolution support for U.S. diplomatic representatives' efforts at upcoming international human rights meetings. We will then personally deliver all these proclamations to the Wallenberg Tribunal now scheduled for Stockholm this fall.

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We sincerely appreciate your involvement in this issue and we look forward to working closely with members of your staff in order to maximize the impact of this symbolic gesture. If I can be of any assistance in answering any questions, please do not hesitate to call upon me directly.

Sincerely yours,

Abraham Cooper

Rabbi Abraham Cooper
Assistant to the Dean
Director of Outreach Programs

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